



Bushfire Legal Aid Scheme

Support for **small businesses** and **primary producers** affected by the 2019/2020 bushfires

Guide for Small Businesses and Primary Producers

Bushfire Legal Aid Scheme

The Commonwealth Government has provided funding for legal assistance to NSW primary producers and small businesses dealing with legal issues relating to the 2019/2020 bushfires. Under the Scheme, private solicitors will have access to legal aid funding to provide legal services.

How does the Scheme work?

If you are an eligible small business owner or primary producer, your private solicitor can apply for \$2000 to assist you to resolve your legal issue arising from the 2019/20 bushfires, and up to \$5000 for related expenses like expert reports. Additional funding is available in reasonable circumstances.

If you have more than one bushfire related legal issue your solicitor may receive more than one funding approval for legal services and expenses.

The funding is available for legal issues including, but not limited to:

- Insurance disputes
- Commercial leases
- Contract disputes
- Planning and building law
- Local Government disputes
- Entitlements to government grants and schemes
- Credit and debt
- Banking
- Fencing issues
- Property law
- Employment law issues for employers

Am I eligible?

To be eligible for funding under the Scheme, you must meet the following criteria:

- You are a **primary producer** or **small business owner**.
- Your business or farm is in one of the designated LGAs (see right).
- You have a **legal issue** arising from the **2019/2020 bushfire season** in one of these LGAs.

A primary producer is defined as an individual, trust or company carrying on a primary production business alone, or in partnership. It includes:

- plant and/or animal cultivation
- fishing and/or pearling
- tree farming and/or felling

A small business owner is defined as a person who runs a business with 19 or fewer employees.

- Your application must have merit. In assessing merit Legal Aid NSW must be satisfied that:
 - It is likely that the funds will resolve your legal issue, and
 - You are committed to the early resolution of your legal issue.

No means test applies to the application. This means we will not look at your financial situation to determine if you are eligible.

How do I apply?

For information on how to apply, contact your local solicitor, call the Legal Aid NSW Disaster Response Legal Service on **1800 801 529** or email: disaster.response@legalaid.nsw.gov.au

Where else can I get help?

You can also get free legal assistance for bushfire related legal issues by calling the Financial Rights Legal Centre on **1300 663 464** or by visiting Justice Connect's Bushfire Community Support page: www.justiceconnect.org.au/bushfiresupport

Eligible LGAs

The Local Government Areas (LGAs) covered by the Scheme are:

Armidale	Lithgow
Ballina	Mid-Coast
Bega Valley	Mid-Western
Bellingen	Nambucca
Blue Mountains	Port
Byron	Macquarie-Hastings
Central Coast	Queanbeyan-Palerang
Cessnock	Richmond Valley
Clarence Valley	Shoalhaven
Coffs Harbour	Singleton
Eurobodalla	Snowy Monaro
Glenn Innes-Severn	Snowy Valleys
Hawkesbury	Tenterfield
Inverell	Tweed
Kempsey	Walcha
Kyogle	Wingecarribee
Lismore	Wollondilly

More information is available at: www.disasterhelp.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/.

